

Borough House (Hill Crest)
Dependency (Weaving House)
W. side of State Rt. 261, about .1 mi. S. of
Junction with old Garners Ferry Road
Stateburg
Sumter County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-368

HABS
SC
43-STATBU,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
801 19th Street N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

~~ADDENDUM TO~~

~~Borough House, Weaving House
State Route 261
Stateburg
Sumter County
South Carolina~~

HABS No. SC-368

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43-STATBU,
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~~Addendum to
Borough House (Hill Crest):
Dependency (Weaving House)
State Route 261
Stateburg
Sumter County
South Carolina~~

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013

HABS
SC
43-STATBU,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

~~ADDENDUM TO:~~
Borough House², Weaving House

~~Addendum to~~
~~Borough House (Mill Creek),~~
~~Dependency (Weaving House)~~ HABS No. SC-368

Location: Part of the Borough House plantation complex on west side of State Route 261, 0.8 mile north of intersection of Route 261 and State Route 76-378; Stateburg, Sumter County, South Carolina

U.S.G.S. Wedgefield, SC 7.5 Minute Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) Coordinates:
17.542945.3757065

Present Owner: Mrs. Richard K. Anderson
The Borough House
RFD 3 Box 276
Sumter, South Carolina 29154

Present Use: storage

Significance: The Weaving (or Loom) House is a Greek Revival dependency of the Borough House plantation complex. Built of rammed earth c. 1821, the structure is one of six dependencies (in addition to portions of the main house) to be built of this material. This complex is of potential national significance because of the number of early Greek Revival structures it contains which were built of this unusual material.

The Borough House complex was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Stateburg Historic District in 1971 and as an individual site in 1972.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

NOTE: Background material and site history for the Weaving House may be found in data pages for the Borough House, Stateburg, Sumter County, South Carolina, HABS No. SC-362. Data specific to the Weaving House follows below.

A. PHYSICAL HISTORY

1. DATE OF ERECTION: c. 1821
2. ARCHITECT: The designer of the weaving house is thought to be Dr. William Wallace Anderson, M.D. (1789-1864), owner of the Borough House from 1819 to 1864. (For further information on Dr. Anderson, see Borough House data pages, p. 6.)
3. ORIGINAL AND SUBSEQUENT OWNERS: see Borough House data pages, pp. 7-8.
4. BUILDERS AND SUPPLIERS:

The Weaving House was built chiefly by slaves under the direction of Dr. Anderson. The rammed earth construction method used by Dr. Anderson was based on a description in Rural Economy by S.W. Johnson (New York: 1806); Dr. Anderson's copy of this book is in the Borough House library. It is not known whether slave labor or hired workers executed the finish carpentry and interior surfaces. The clay used to build the earth walls was dug on site, and the stones and brick used for foundations and the chimney were also supplied locally. Glazing was undoubtedly purchased, but the supplier is not known. Hardware for the doors may have been made locally.

5. ORIGINAL PLANS AND CONSTRUCTION:

a. PLANS: No original plans are known to survive.

b. CONSTRUCTION: Foundations of the building were not examined by HABS and no written data specific to the foundations of this structure were found. However, the earth in the region is a dense, solid clay, and for this reason the foundations are very likely flagstones superimposed by brick, similar to that observed in 1926 for the nearby Church of the Holy Cross (also a rammed earth structure) by Thomas A.H. Miller, a agricultural engineer from the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Public Roads. Exterior walls are made of rammed earth, with the chimney on the west side built of brick, integral with the wall. All the rest of the structure is wooden, except for the asphalt shingle roof.

Please see data pages for the Borough House (pp. 9-12) for further discussion of the rammed earth construction method used in this building.

6. ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS:

No alterations or additions to this building are recorded or apparent in the structure. Major repairs were made in 1965 which resulted in concrete reinforcements for the foundations at each corner. The north and south walls were also jacked back into place to close some 1-inch wide cracks. Electric wiring was installed in 1965 for occasions when power is needed.

B. HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND ASSOCIATIONS

Please see data pages for the Borough House, pp. 17-30.

The Weaving House contains two of the original looms used to weave cloth at the plantation, plus the substantial remains of a cotton gin, thought to have been constructed by William Ellison, a free black whose workshop was located in Stateburg.

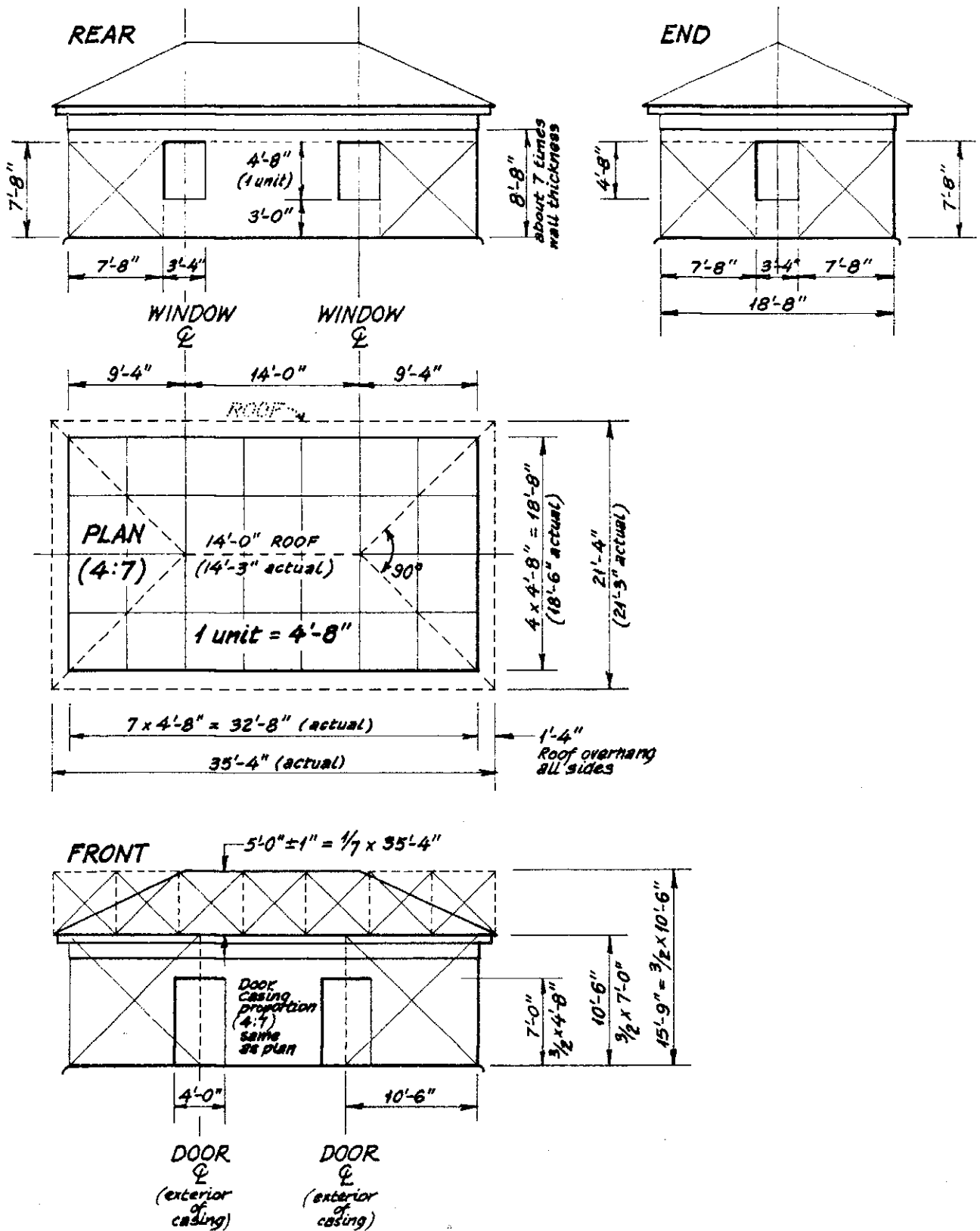
PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. GENERAL STATEMENT:

1. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER: This building consists simply of two adjoining rooms with separate exterior doorways, there being no porch, wings, or other projections. Greek Revival details are limited primarily to a very simple exterior wooden entablature around the tops of the walls and to the four shuttered windows. The building's classical inspirations are far more apparent in a study of its dimensional proportions. The exterior walls are finished with stucco, while the interior surfaces are finished with plaster applied directly to the earth walls. The floors are parged brick, and the chimney serves two fireplaces located in the rooms' adjacent corners on the west wall. The hip roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

Despite its utilitarian appearance, the Weaving House appears to have been the subject of intense classical geometric design work. In plan, the lengths of the building's sides are in the ratio of 7:4, allowing for minor construction error (the 18'-6" sides are 2" shorter than this ratio requires for a building 32'-8" long). These and many other dimensions are multiples of a basic unit of 4'-8".

If a grid of 4'-8" squares is laid over the building plan, it is apparent that the window centerlines on the back (west) facade are $\frac{2}{7}$ of the building length from the ends. The windows on the ends are centered in a facade $\frac{4}{7}$ as long as the building, or $\frac{2}{7}$ from the corners. The ridge of the hip roof is nearly



$\frac{3}{7}$ the length of the building; thus the hips intersect the ridge at points $\frac{2}{7}$ from the ends and sides, putting the roof hips at 45° angles in projection (plan). The window casings are 4'-8" high, and the door casings $1\frac{1}{2}$ times this height, or 7'-0". (Since the door casings are 4'-0" wide, this makes the door casings 7:4 rectangles, same as the building plan.) Interestingly, the tops of the window casings are 7'-8" from the tops of the foundations; this is the same as the horizontal dimension from the corners of the building to the nearest window casing edges (see page 4). The centerlines of the doors, however, do not line up at points $\frac{2}{7}$ along the front facade. They are instead centered 10'-6" from the corners, which also happens to be the height of the roof drip from the foundations and $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the height of the door casings.

The height of the entablature above the foundation is a bit of a mystery in the midst of the other relationships. The 8'-8" dimension does not seem to be a multiple of anything, except that it is very close to being 7 times the wall thickness (1'-2" to 1'-3"). It is also close to being $\frac{5}{6}$ of the height to the roof drip, which would be a proper Palladian proportion if columns stood under the entablature.

The overall height of the building is within 3 inches of being $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the height of the roof drip from the foundation top; this is $(1\frac{1}{2})^2$ times the height of the door casings, and $(1\frac{1}{2})^3$ times 4'-8". The roof itself, a bit longer than the building at 35'-4", is 7 times as long as it is high, within the error allowed in measuring the roof height.

2. **CONDITION OF FABRIC:** The exterior walls, foundations, and roof are all sound. Interior finishes, windows, and doors are all intact, except for the mantelpiece in the southern room. The building is actively maintained by its owner.

B. DESCRIPTION OF EXTERIOR:

1. **OVERALL DIMENSIONS:** approximately 18'-6" by 32'-8" over exterior walls; height to the roof peak from the interior floor is 15'-6", or about 16 feet above grade.
2. **FOUNDATIONS:** Several courses of brick can be observed at the bases of the south, west, and north walls of the building. Unlike the walls, these are not coated by a stucco finish. At the corners, smooth concrete buttresses lie at the base of the walls.

3. WALL CONSTRUCTION: Rammed earth
5. CHIMNEYS: The structure has one brick chimney which serves two fireplaces. It does not have a stucco finish.
6. OPENINGS:
 - a. DOORWAYS AND DOORS: There are two doorways in the east side of the building. They each have a moulded casing with a deep reveal and two solid wooden doors, each made up of wooden sheathing. The extreme edges of the casings measure approximately 7'-0" x 4'-0" (7:4 ratio) on the exterior, while the actual doors measure 3'-0" by 7'-0".
 - b. WINDOWS: There are four six-over-six, double-hung wooden sash windows. Each is flanked by two louvered, two-panel wooden shutters.
7. ROOF: Asphalt-shingled hip roof. Internal construction not examined by HABS but assumed to be wooden.

C. DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR:

1. FLOOR PLANS: This structure contains two nearly square rooms, measuring approximately 16'-0" by 15'-11", and 16'-0" by 13'-4". Each room has an entry from the exterior, and two windows, with one connecting door inside.
2. FLOORING: The floor is brick parged with cement, the brick having been laid directly on the earth.
3. WALL AND CEILING FINISHES: The interior walls are finished in plaster applied directly to the earth walls. The ceiling is finished plaster on wood lath.
4. OPENINGS: Windows and the door were described above, but all have deep reveals on the interior due to the 15-inch thickness of the walls. The reveals of the windows are splayed, those for the doors are not.
5. DECORATIVE FEATURES AND TRIM:
 - a. TRIM: The trim on the interior is a plain beaded baseboard and a single molding run around the door and window casings. The mantelpiece in the northern room is intact and very simple in design. The mantelpiece in the southern room is of similar design but has deteriorated.

b. **HARDWARE:** All hardware is wrought iron. The doors are carried on H-L hinges and are fastened by nails. The doors are kept shut by a box lock with iron knobs. Shutter hardware (strap hinges, pintles, and keeps) is also wrought iron, fastened by nails.

6. **MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT:**

The structure contains no mechanical equipment or plumbing. It is fitted, however, with several baseboard plugs.

D. **SITE**

1. **GENERAL SITING AND ORIENTATION:** The Weaving House is located approximately 90 feet southwest of the Borough House conservatory, and 40 feet northwest of the Schoolhouse/Library. The main doors face east across a narrow gravel path, and look onto a small, grassy lawn beyond a band of ground cover. The other sides of the building face into trees and shady areas without grass.

Please see data pages for the Borough House for further description of the surrounding grounds (pp. 46-50) and consult measured drawings of the landscape and site.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Please see data pages for the Borough House for a complete bibliography (pp. 50-53).

For information on William Ellison, see:

Johnson, Michael P. and James L. Roark, Black Masters: A Free Family of Color in the Old South. (Charlotte, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.)

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Weaving House was recorded as part of the Borough House recording project. Please see data pages for the Borough House for the project description (pp. 53-54).